

## Post Mill Lane Planning Application - Transport Note 1648/17

### Introduction

The Report by La Ronde Wright contains factual inaccuracies and distortions. This is indicated by non-existent public buses, inaccurate accident data, incorrect Street names and dependence on a flawed report undertaken by Create Consulting. With such errors how can credibility be given to the desk top analysis and their interpretation of these data?

The report completely fails to place the proposed extension of Post Mill Lane in the context of the village as a whole. There are currently approximately 350 houses in the central area of the village. 50 homes have been approved, but not yet built and a further 208 have been applied for. To this one adds 30 windfall houses resulting in a potential increase of 284 homes. Whilst the proposed additional 24 houses at Post Mill may seem modest, it represents a 7% increase of the 350 houses in the village.

### The Brief

Suffolk County Council recognise that all of the proposed developments need to be assessed cumulatively and "*wish to ensure a full assessment is undertaken and investigate if there could be any mitigation if the proposals are granted.*" The main areas of concern are traffic congestion, (not exclusively congestion at road junctions), Road Safety, pedestrian and cycle links and junction capacity.

Congestion More houses result in more traffic. The 24 houses proposed at Post Mill do not include any retirement homes. Two cars per household is the norm in Fressingfield. Therefore approximately 50 additional cars will be exiting onto New Street. There is no evidence to support the statement that affordable homes have a lower number of cars per household. Indeed these residents would probably be of a younger age group therefore travelling for employment. There is no discussion of congestion in New Street. The medical centre and shop are in New Street which is very narrow with limited footpaths and it can become very congested. This is particularly relevant to Post Mill as the car park at the medical centre, which is very close to Post Mill, is frequently full and over spill cars park on the road by the Post Mill entrance. Additionally people attending the shop frequently turn their car around and use Post Mill or the Medical Centre to facilitate this, thereby adding to the congestion and compromising safety. On street parking on New Street is also an issue as some of the houses have no alternative parking.

The above points should have been examined in the traffic survey. Although no significant traffic hold ups were identified at the junctions, it is not at the junctions that the main problems occur.



*Medical Centre car park - New Street*

**Road Safety and sustainability** New Street is a class C road. The Applicant recognises that the road cannot be widened or footpaths developed. Pedestrians, cycles and traffic all converge on New Street.

There are **very limited** facilities in the village of Fressingfield. There are only 58 whole time equivalent jobs in the village . With **one bus a week** the only way to go to work is by private transport. ( other buses cited are school buses not available to the general public) All of the Secondary School children leave the village to attend school. The increase in traffic will negatively impact on Road Safety. There have been a number of accidents in New Street and recently at the junction with Jubilee Corner.



*Accident at Jubilee Corner*

The use of the crash data by the developer has been limited to New Street. Between June 2007 and June 2017 Suffolk County Council have released details of 13 car accidents in Fressingfield, of which two have been fatal. The large number of accidents cannot be ignored. The vast number of accidents go unreported as if there is no serious injury the police are not called.

**Pedestrian and cycle links** Figure 1 presents a very misleading picture of pedestrian links accessible by footpaths. **ONLY** the Health Centre is currently fully accessible from Post Mill by foot path. The current Scout Hut and Baptist Chapel are not fully accessible by footpath. There is no guarantee that the proposed Baptist Chapel and Scout Hut will be built as they are part of Hybrid Applications. We agree that the pub, shop, bus stop, school, village hall are not fully accessible by footpath. The Sports and Social Club is most definitely **not fully** accessible by footpath. The Anglian Church, The Methodist Church the playing fields and Fox and Goose Restaurant are not mentioned. None of these are fully accessible by footpath.

The report does not highlight the important point that the footpaths that do exist in New Street are very limited and are on one side of the road. To use the

footpaths pedestrians from Post Mill have to cross the road and if they remain on that side of the road there are four road junctions which have to be crossed.

The " Google" Map below highlights in red where a footpath occurs. The road running east/west in the centre of the picture is New Street. The Post Mill development site is in the top left of the picture.



**Junction Capacity** The Applicant relies heavily on the report undertaken by Create Consulting. We have major concerns over the Create Consulting report which are addressed in detail our comments on 1449/17 and 1432/17. The survey was for less than 24 hours; did not cover the most congested area of the village; it did not cover the whole junction at Jubilee Corner; was not on one of the busy week days; was immediately after roadworks on Harleston Hill with traffic control ( inevitably some people would avoid this route next day not wishing to be held up.) There have been a number of accidents relating to the junctions surveyed which are not recorded and the methodology employed in the Create Report is flawed.

**Mitigation** The **only** mitigation offered is a pedestrian link from Post Mill to New Street. (this was already in the original Application). This reduces the access without a footpath to the shop from 185 metres to 145 metres, a saving of 40 metres for the residents of the 48 homes in Post Mill Lane. **No other mitigation** is proposed.

**Conclusion** The impact of the proposed Post Mill development ( 24 Houses ) when combined with the already approved Red house Farm development ( 28 houses) will be significant and lead to unsustainable pressure on New Street and the surrounding areas. No mitigation is proposed and the impact on highways must be

considered "severe" as the increase in traffic presents an unacceptable risk to public safety.

John and Pam Castro ( Members of SAFE)

31st October 2017